



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH  
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November 12, 2002

Dr. Maxine Hayes  
1112 SE Quince Street  
PO Box 47890  
Olympia, WA 98504-7890

Dr. Wylie Burke  
University of Washington  
Dept. of History and Medical Ethics  
A204 Health Sciences Center  
PO Box 357120  
Seattle, WA 98195-7120

Dear Drs. Hayes and Burke,

Thank you both for agreeing to present on "Public Health Policy Challenges and Opportunities in Genomics" at a joint meeting of the Washington State Board of Health and the King County Board of Health. The meeting will take place on **Tuesday morning, December 10 at the Hilton Seattle Airport & Conference Center, 17620 Pacific Hwy South, Seattle, WA.** Your presentations are scheduled from **9:15 to 10:00 a.m.**, giving you each approximately 20 minutes, including time for questions and discussion.

As we discussed in our recent conversations, this is not an effort to discuss issues of genetic privacy and discrimination. Thanks to your great contributions to the Genetics Task Force, those issues will be advanced to the legislature in the coming weeks as the Board transmits the GTF report. This presentation is an effort to acquaint these two boards with the broader subjects of genetics and public health. It is an effort to stimulate their thoughts about next steps they might like to take to advance the public health policy dialogue on these important issues.

I hope your talks will begin with a brief version of "Genomics 101" that reviews some basic terms and understandings about genetics and genomics and that gives a very brief and broad overview of the field for this group of elected and appointed officials. Many of them may not have very much detailed knowledge of these subjects. Next I hope your talk, Dr. Hayes, will include the excellent observations you shared with the Genetics Task Force last April regarding public health genetics issues and challenges. Finally, I hope you, Dr. Burke, will share your views on some of the key challenges we face as a society confronting the genomics revolution. In particular, I hope you will share your thoughts about the ethical challenges presented by the use of genetics information in the work place, as a component of our unequally accessible medical care system and as a commodity being marketed now directly to consumers. I hope you each will close with your thoughts about any general areas of research, dialogue or policy development that you believe these boards might productively pursue.

I know this is a very tall order, but knowing the two of you, I know your comments will engender a focused, enlightened and very stimulating discussion. Thank you for your continuing commitment to advancing public health policy and practice, and for contributing so generously of your time and expertise.

Sincerely,

Don Sloma, Executive Director  
Washington State Board of Health